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Delta Stewardship Council
980 Ninth Street, Suite 1500
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: May 25, 2017 Council Meeting to Discuss Delta Plan Amendment

Dear Council Members:

While work commitments did not allow me to be present today to speak to you, I wanted to provide you with my thoughts and comments as you move forward to make decisions on the Delta Plan before you. Your job is to achieve the co-equal goals of providing a more reliable water supply for California and protecting, restoring and enhancing the Delta and its ecosystem. The goal of protecting and enhancing the unique cultural, recreational, natural resource and agricultural values of the Delta should **not** include the proposed Twin Tunnel Water (“political”) “Fix” Plan of Governor Brown and the legislature, or any additional means of water conveyance including a re-branded “dual conveyance” to bypass the Delta sending additional water resources to Southern California at this time. There are no new water sources to send south!

Staff is correct in concluding that promoting the status quo of California’s water infrastructure is not defensible. I agree. Therefore, we need to think outside the box and come up with better, workable solutions to the allocation of water while protecting and enhancing California’s most precious resource, the Sacramento/San Joaquin Delta.

Any conveyance around the Delta cannot and will not improve water reliability for all of the 58 counties in California because the water sources are already over-allocated, much like the Colorado River. History tells us that the Colorado River

Compact of 1992 was predicated on faulty estimates of water availability -17.5 million acre feet per year divided between the seven competing states when in fact there was really only 11.5 to 11.7 million acre feet per year from 1930-1952. California took Arizona to court and secured a guarantee of 4.4 million acre feet per year of river water, based on faulty estimates, before anyone else got their allocation. Three canals moved that water to Southern California and the entire Owens Valley was drained as well. The San Joaquin River was over-used by Central Valley farmers. And like today, there was significant groundwater over-drafting causing subsidence in the Central Valley. Then came Governor Brown's father's California Water Project and the proposed Peripheral Canal, and now the Southland wants more - they want it all, at the expense of the precious Delta and all 58 counties in California. The water wars of California have never receded and people have not learned from past mistakes. There must be some equity created for all Californians.

California needs to bring all of its water users and interested parties together, from all 58 counties, and work out a compact with water allocation estimates that are reasoned and come close to what is known to be reliable based on historical data. Faced with historical weather fluctuations, we cannot, as the 6th or 7th largest economy in the world, continue on a water policy path guaranteeing users water that isn't there. Let us not make the same mistakes made in the Colorado scheme resulting in fighting, water wars, lawsuits and the current water crisis we are in today. We have to be more honest and reasoned about how much water there is flowing down the Sacramento River and how much gets allocated to the north and the south. Yes, we need to divide the state in any plan of allocation, as the Colorado plan did - the north held most of the water the south needed to grow and develop. Planned, structured and reasoned development is in the state's interests for future generations.

The Peripheral Canal, which was turned down by voters, was predicated on a plan to bring new water sources from the Columbia River to continue California's growth, especially in the Southland. The canal would by-pass the Delta, like the proposed Twin (40 foot diameter) Tunnel Plan, and send the additional water directly to Southern California. Both of those plans never happened and hopefully the "fix" won't either. However, today, monied special interests in the Central Valley and Southern California including MWD (why have they recently purchased Delta islands in Northern California?) have been engaged in a pay-to-play, quid-pro-quo take-over of all of California's northern water resources secured through campaign contributions to state and federal officials, at the

expense of all 58 counties, and without a vote of the people of California. This business-as-usual, government-business collusion and corruption is unacceptable!

Governor Brown and the legislature were less than honest with California citizens/ voters when they pushed the Twin Tunnel Plan through without public input or the ability to vote on the matter. The governor said the aptly named “water fix” plan would insure water deliveries in case of levy failure due to an earthquake. If levy failure was the real issue, why didn’t the governor and legislature allocate infrastructure money in the past to update and reinforce the existing levies? The answer is simple - the water “fix” has always been about a political “fix,” a payback to campaign donors. It would result in the largest transfer of public wealth to private resources in the history of the state. In addition, the “fix” is estimated to cost \$17 billion but like the run-away costs of the Bay Bridge debacle and the high speed rail plan, the costs will likely exceed \$60 to 70 billion or more. And the state already has a mountain of debt.

No one is being realistic about what this “fix” means for California’s water future. This is, in the end, one of the governor’s legacy projects that will surely fail like the other plans he has come up with. This is bad water policy and even worse public policy and no way to address the attendant harm such a “fix” would cause to the most significant, unique, essential and cherished resource California has - the Sacramento/San Joaquin Delta!

Let’s picture what this “fix” means - twin 41 foot tunnels were blasted into the canyon walls at Glen Canyon in Utah, diverting the entire Colorado River flow so that bedrock could be reached and the Glen Canyon Dam could be built. I hope this picture paints what California is looking at with this proposed “water fix” - it will basically enable the transfer of the entire Sacramento River flow to Central Valley growers and Southern California water interests, and all at taxpayer expense. Even two thirds of the entire river flow being diverted is unacceptable! And, who decides how much and when water gets shipped south? This is bad water and public policy and will create irrevocable harm to the Delta and its surrounding communities.

Removing water to maintain a healthy estuary will mean the collapse of the entire Delta ecosystem. And, with no new guaranteed sources of water inflow to the Delta system, taking away what is needed to maintain a vibrant ecosystem while balancing the needs of water users in all 58 counties is sheer lunacy. You can’t take and give what you don’t have to take and give.

The existing conveyance system works just fine. There needs to be some fine-tuning done to insure adequate water deliveries to the south and the survival of the fragile Delta ecosystem. First and foremost, the state must find new sources of water. We need to strengthen the existing Delta levees, reduce the amount of water taken from the Delta and retire toxic farmland, increase natural flows of fresh water through the Delta and increase reliance on local water storage, improve water capture and storage and **make conservation mandatory for all California water users** especially in our semi-arid and desert climates to the south.

I strongly disagree with Governor Brown on his proposed “fix,” and lost all faith and confidence in and respect for him when he said of those who voiced opposition to his “fix,” “Shut up, you don’t know what the hell you’re talking about!” That kind of pious, denigrating, disrespectful tone and pronouncement to those in opposition is not acceptable from any government official. No Governor Brown, we do know what we are talking about. It is you who are the problem with your political water “fix.”

I strongly urge you to eliminate the Twin Tunnels Water “Fix” Plan from the Delta Plan Assessment before you. You need to think outside the box and come up with solutions that will secure the health and safety of the Delta, provide adequate water delivers to the Southland and bring California and all of its water users into the 22nd Century. You and all Californians need a new way of thinking about water and the future of the Delta. You have an awesome responsibility and obligation before you in seeking balance and equity for all California water users. The future of the California Delta rests with you.

Thank you for considering my thoughts and comments on this matter of mutual concern.

Very truly yours,

(original in my file signed)

John S. Blackburn